

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1517

To enhance the Human Exploitation Rescue Operations Act of 2015, and
for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 29, 2017

Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CORNYN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To enhance the Human Exploitation Rescue Operations Act
of 2015, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “HERO Improvements
5 Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. HERO ACT IMPROVEMENTS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 890A of the Homeland
8 Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 473) is amended—

9 (1) in subsection (a)—

1 (A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “Home-
 2 land Security Investigations,” after “Enforce-
 3 ment,”; and

4 (B) by amending paragraph (2) to read as
 5 follows:

6 “(2) PURPOSE.—The Center shall provide in-
 7 vestigative assistance, training, and equipment to
 8 support domestic and international investigations of
 9 cyber-related crimes by the Department.”; and

10 (2) in subsection (b)—

11 (A) in paragraph (2)(C), by inserting after
 12 “personnel” the following: “, which shall in-
 13 clude participating in training for Homeland
 14 Security Investigations personnel conducted by
 15 Internet Crimes Against Children Task
 16 Forces”; and

17 (B) in paragraph (3)—

18 (i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting
 19 “in child exploitation investigations” after
 20 “Enforcement”;

21 (ii) in subparagraph (B)—

22 (I) in the matter preceding clause
 23 (i), by inserting “in child exploitation
 24 investigations” after “Enforcement”;
 25 and

1 (II) in clause (i), by inserting
2 “child” before “victims”;

3 (iii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting
4 “child exploitation” after “number of”;
5 and

6 (iv) in subparagraph (D), by inserting
7 “child exploitation” after “number of”;
8 and

9 (3) in subsection (c)(2)—

10 (A) in subparagraph (A), in the matter
11 preceding clause (i), by inserting “and admin-
12 ister the Digital Forensics and Document and
13 Media Exploitation (DF/DOMEX) program”
14 after “forensics”;

15 (B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting
16 “and emerging technologies” after “forensics”;
17 and

18 (C) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and
19 the National Association to Protect Children”
20 and inserting “, the National Association to
21 Protect Children, and other governmental enti-
22 ties”.

23 (b) HERO CHILD-RESCUE CORPS.—Section 890A of
24 the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 473) is
25 amended—

1 (1) by redesignating subsection (e) as sub-
2 section (g); and

3 (2) by inserting after subsection (d) the fol-
4 lowing:

5 “(e) HERO CHILD-RESCUE CORPS.—

6 “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—There is established
8 within the Center a Human Exploitation Res-
9 cue Operation Child-Rescue Corps Program (re-
10 ferred to in this subsection as the ‘HERO
11 Child-Rescue Corps Program’), which shall be a
12 Department-wide program, operated in partner-
13 ship with the Department of Defense and the
14 National Association to Protect Children.

15 “(B) TRAINING REQUIREMENT.—As part
16 of the HERO Child-Rescue Corps Program, the
17 National Association to Protect Children shall
18 provide logistical support for program partici-
19 pants.

20 “(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the HERO
21 Child-Rescue Corps Program shall be to recruit,
22 train, equip, and employ wounded, ill, and injured
23 veterans and transitioning members of the military
24 within the Department or other participating agen-
25 cies, in employment positions to assist in combating

1 and preventing child exploitation, including inves-
2 tigative, intelligence, analyst, inspection, and foren-
3 sic positions or any other positions determined ap-
4 propriate by the employing agency.

5 “(3) FUNCTIONS.—The HERO Child-Rescue
6 Program shall—

7 “(A) provide, recruit, train, and equip par-
8 ticipants of the Program in the areas of digital
9 forensics, investigation, analysis, intelligence,
10 and victim identification, as determined by the
11 Center and the needs of the Department; and

12 “(B) ensure that during the 1-year period
13 beginning on the date of enactment of this sub-
14 section, participants of the Program are as-
15 signed to investigate and analyze—

16 “(i) child exploitation;

17 “(ii) child pornography;

18 “(iii) unidentified child victims;

19 “(iv) human trafficking;

20 “(v) traveling child sex offenders; and

21 “(vi) forced child labor, including the
22 sexual exploitation of minors.

23 “(4) PAID INTERNSHIP AND HIRING PRO-
24 GRAM.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the avail-
2 ability of appropriations for such purpose, the
3 Secretary may use funds available for Oper-
4 ations and support to establish a paid intern-
5 ship and hiring program for the purpose of
6 placing participants of the HERO Child-Rescue
7 Corps Program into paid internship positions,
8 with the intent of subsequent appointment of
9 the participants to permanent positions, as de-
10 scribed in subparagraph (C).

11 “(B) INTERNSHIP POSITIONS.—Under the
12 paid internship and hiring program required to
13 be established under subparagraph (A), the
14 Secretary may appoint not more than 72 indi-
15 viduals to internship positions in the Center per
16 year—

17 “(i) which shall be in addition to any
18 internship or staffing positions within
19 United States Immigration and Customs
20 Enforcement in existence on the date en-
21 actment of this subsection; and

22 “(ii) who shall be assigned or detailed
23 by the Center in accordance with subpara-
24 graph (C).

25 “(C) PLACEMENT.—

1 “(i) IN GENERAL.—An individual who
2 is appointed to an internship position
3 under this paragraph shall be assigned or
4 detailed to a position in an agency that—

5 “(I) has expressed the need to fill
6 a vacancy;

7 “(II) anticipates making an ap-
8 pointment to a full-time position upon
9 completion of the internship; and

10 “(III) accepts the training pa-
11 rameters as determined by the Center
12 to be the standard of the Department
13 for the HERO Child-Rescue Corps
14 Program.

15 “(ii) PREFERENCE.—The Secretary
16 shall give a preference to Homeland Secu-
17 rity Investigations in assignments or de-
18 tails under clause (i).

19 “(D) TERM OF INTERNSHIP.—An appoint-
20 ment to an internship position under this para-
21 graph shall be for a term not to exceed 12
22 months.

23 “(E) RATE AND TERM OF PAY.—After
24 completion of initial group training and upon
25 beginning work at an assigned office, an indi-

vidual appointed to an internship position under this paragraph who is not receiving monthly basic pay as a member of the Armed Forces on active duty shall receive compensation at a rate that is—

“(i) not less than the minimum rate of basic pay payable for a position at level GS–5 of the General Schedule; and

“(ii) not more than the maximum rate of basic pay payable for a position at level GS–7 of the General Schedule.

“(F) ELIGIBILITY.—In establishing the paid internship and hiring program required under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall ensure that the eligibility requirements for participation in the internship program are the same as the eligibility requirements for participation in the HERO Child-Rescue Corps Program.

“(f) HERO CORPS HIRING.—Subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose, there are authorized to be established within Homeland Security Investigations the following number of positions, which shall be in addition to any positions in existence on the date of enactment of this subsection, for the hiring and permanent employment of graduates of the paid internship and

1 hiring program required to be established under sub-
 2 section (e)(4):

3 “(1) 36 positions in fiscal year 2017.

4 “(2) 72 positions in fiscal year 2018.

5 “(3) 108 positions in fiscal year 2019.

6 “(4) 144 positions in fiscal year 2020.

7 “(5) 180 positions in fiscal year 2021.”.

8 (c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

9 Section 302 of the HERO Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–
 10 22; 129 Stat. 255) is amended—

11 (1) by striking subsection (c); and

12 (2) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
 13 section (c).

○